Introduction
Welcome to the Slot Home Evaluation Task Force! The task force will assist City staff with an evaluation of issues associated with slot home development in Denver’s neighborhoods and recommend specific zoning text amendments to address identified issues.

In our kickoff meeting, we will introduce the project, clarify the charge to the task force, establish working relationships and refine an initial ‘problem statement’ to better frame issues with slot home development. Please review the draft Problem Identification Report included in this packet prior to our meeting on January 10. Meeting discussion will focus on issues associated with slot home development and related refinements to the problem identification statement on page 23 of the report.

Packet Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft Meeting Agenda</td>
<td>This provides a draft summary of topics to be addressed at the January 10 meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft Problem Identification Report</td>
<td>This report is intended to more clearly define potential issues with slot home development throughout Denver. It describes the existing conditions (and zoning regulations) under which slot homes are built, summarizes trends in recent slot home construction, outlines public process and sets forth a draft problem statement to guide later evaluation of alternative design solutions and zoning tools. City staff have reviewed previous community comments and surveyed existing slot home development to draft the initial problem identification statement on page 23 of the report. The draft problem statement will be significantly refined based on task force discussion and community dialog. The refined problem statement will then guide remaining steps in the project, including a recommended strategy to address slot homes, and a proposed Denver Zoning Code text amendment.</td>
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What is a Slot Home?
A ‘slot home’ is a multi-unit residential structure consisting of attached dwelling units arranged side-by-side and primarily perpendicular to the street. They are also sometimes called "sideways-facing town homes" or "fraux homes."
DENVER SLOTHOME EVALUATION
TASK FORCE AGENDA

Tuesday January 10, 2017 – 2:45-5:45pm
Wellington Webb Municipal Building
201 W. Colfax Ave. Room 4F6

Meeting Objectives
- Introduce the project
- Clarify the charge to the task force
- Establish a working relationship between the task force and city staff
- Refine an initial ‘problem statement’ to guide future discussion

I. Welcome
II. Introductions
   - Introduce yourself
   - Your favorite multi-unit residential building in Denver – What three features make it great?
   - From your perspective, what are the two important aspirations for this project?
III. How the Group Will Operate
   - Ground rules
   - Consensus-based
   - Task force communications
   - Public comments at meetings
IV. Staff Presentation
   - Project Scope & Schedule
   - Urban Design & the Public Realm
   - Existing Slot Home Conditions (zoning, types, trends)
   - Staff’s Draft Problem Identification
     - Hold comments for activities
     - Can provide comments through 01/20/17
   - Introduction to the Discussion Activities
V. Public Comment
VI. Task Force Discussion/Activities on Problem Statement
   - Discussion Activity 1: Typical Slot Home Attributes
     - Note positive attributes of typical slot home configurations illustrated on posters
     - Note negative attributes
     - Discussion
   - Discussion Activity 2: Draft Problem Statement
     - Use post-its to comment on each element of the draft problem statement - What can be refined, strengthened or added?
     - Use post-its to list issues we may have missed on the “Additional Issues” poster
     - Discussion
VII. Next Steps
   - What additional data is needed?
   - Best Days/Times for meetings (in general)
   - Confirm next meeting date
In recent years, “slot homes” have been constructed in many neighborhoods throughout Denver resulting in a new development pattern that can detract from the design quality and sense of community in Denver’s neighborhoods. For an illustrated definition of “slot home” development, see page 2.

This report is intended to more clearly define potential issues with slot home development. It describes the existing conditions (and regulations) under which slot homes are built, summarizes trends in recent slot home construction, outlines public process and sets forth a draft problem statement to guide later evaluation of alternative design solutions and zoning tools.

**THE SLOT HOME EVALUATION PROJECT**

This report is part of a citywide Slot Home Evaluation & Text Amendment project being conducted by Denver’s Department of Community Planning and Development (CPD). The project will consider all zone districts and building forms that are relevant to slot home construction regardless of where they occur in Denver. This includes the Garden Court building form, which is subject to the regulatory moratorium summarized at right. A stakeholder task force will guide the project and ensure an inclusive public process. See “Slot Home Task Force” on page 22 for more information.

The Slot Home Evaluation Project will result in specific recommended amendments to the Denver Zoning Code to address the problem identification statement summarized in Section 2.2 on page 24 and promote infill development that is more compatible with Denver’s neighborhoods. See page 3 for an illustrated project time line.
A “slot home” is a multi-unit residential structure consisting of attached dwelling units arranged side-by-side and primarily perpendicular to the street. Most dwelling units have an individual, direct entrance to the exterior facing a side lot line or center pedestrian court. Individual vehicular garages are generally located beneath each unit. Slot homes are also sometimes called “sideways-facing town homes” or “fraux homes.” As illustrated below and on the following page, slot homes have been built throughout Denver’s neighborhoods using a variety of configurations. See pages 16-19 for additional information on the slot home configurations illustrated below.

**A. SINGLE ROW OF SLOT HOMES - See PAGE 17 For More Information**

**B. SLOT HOMES WITH A CENTER DRIVEWAY - See PAGE 18 For More Information**
SLOT HOMES IN DENVER  
(Continued)

Slot homes occur in a variety of zone districts, from lower-scale Row House (RH) districts to multi-unit residential districts, mixed-use commercial districts. Depending on the zone district, slot homes are built using a range of Denver Zoning Code building forms, including the Duplex, Town House, Row House, Garden Court, Apartment, General and Shopfront forms. See Section 1.2 “Existing Zoning” on page 6, for more information.

C. SLOT HOMES WITH A CENTER PEDESTRIAN COURT OR MEWS - See PAGE 19 For More Information

D. SLOT HOMES WITH DETACHED PARKING IN THE REAR - See PAGE 20 For More Information

SLOT HOME EVALUATION PROJECT TIME LINE

Beginning in late 2016, Denver’s Department of Community Planning and Development will conduct research, analysis and public outreach to identify the slot home problem more clearly, explore alternatives and identify tools to promote improved design outcomes. The process will lead to proposed text amendments to the Denver Zoning Code to address slot homes in early 2018 as illustrated on the project time line below.
1.0 EXISTING SLOT HOME CONDITIONS

Slot homes have been built in many different neighborhoods in a variety of configurations. Their defining characteristic - a sideways orientation to the street - can occur in a range of zone districts using several Denver Zoning Code building forms.

This section provides background information on how and where slot homes occur, and summarizes trends in slot home construction across Denver. It focuses on the existing zoning regulations that allow for slot home construction and typical slot home configurations on a variety of lots. The existing conditions summarized in this section provide a foundation for the draft problem statement set forth in Section 2.0 on page 21.

1.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

Citywide and neighborhood-specific plans articulate the vision and objectives for neighborhood development throughout Denver. Each plan is based on extensive public process that seeks to balance a variety of stakeholder interests. The City uses plan guidance to inform implementation efforts, such as regulatory updates, that shape the character of redevelopment. The adopted plans summarized below provide guidance relevant to addressing slot home development.

**Comprehensive Plan 2000**

This plan sets the overall vision for Denver. It directs planning efforts to build on the city’s legacy of high-quality urban design and stable, attractive neighborhoods. Comprehensive Plan 2000 notes that the Denver Zoning Code is an evolving document that will continue to be revised to promote a built environment with greater overall design integrity. The plan also acknowledges the need to accommodate infill development that is “consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.”

**Blueprint Denver**

This plan builds on Comprehensive Plan 2000 with focused citywide land use and transportation recommendations. It designates the entire city as either an Area of Stability (stable residential areas that may accommodate some new development and redevelopment) or Area of Change (areas where the majority of new development will occur). Blueprint Denver also recommends implementation of specific design standards for neighborhood development including building height, scale, pedestrian access, vehicular access and garage design. The City is currently updating Blueprint Denver as part of the DenverRight planning process.

**Neighborhood & Small Area Plans**

Neighborhood and small area plans provide additional guidance regarding design and development objectives within some individual neighborhoods, corridors and other districts. The City is currently updating or drafting new plans that will cover the whole city through the Neighborhood Planning Initiative.
1.2 EXISTING ZONING

Existing zoning regulations allow for slot home construction in a range of zone districts using a variety of building forms. Specific development standards, such as height limits, setbacks and transparency requirements, shape the form of slot homes and other neighborhood infill. As summarized in the sidebar at left and on page 15, the standards that apply to slot home development have evolved over time. This Slot Home Evaluation and Text Amendment project will propose updates to Denver Zoning Code districts and building forms to address slot home development.

Additional details on zone districts, building forms and design standards that relate to slot home development are provided below.

Zone Districts in Which Slot Homes Occur

Slot homes may be built in a variety of existing zone districts, including Town House (TH), Row House (RH), Multi Unit (MU), Residential Office (RO), Mixed Use (RX, MX) and Main Street (MS) districts. They are also possible in some special zone districts such as Master Planned (M) or Industrial Mixed Use (I-MX). Slot homes are not possible in Single Unit (SU) or Two Unit (TU) districts. Although the zone districts that allow for slot home construction cover a significant portion of the city’s geography, actual slot home construction is concentrated in Multi Unit (MU), Mixed Use (MX) and Row House (RH) zone districts within the Denver Zoning Code’s Urban (U-) and General Urban (G-) neighborhood contexts (primarily established locations relatively near the core of the city), as illustrated in the charts on page 16.

Building Forms Used to Develop Slot Homes

Within each zone district, the development standards associated with one or more building forms may be used to build slot homes. The specific development standards (maximum height, minimum setbacks, etc.) vary by the combination of zone district and building form. Depending on the zone district, slot homes may be built using the Town House, Duplex, Row House, Garden Court, Apartment, General or Shopfront building form standards as summarized in “Summary of Zone Districts & Building Forms” on page 7. Although some Denver Zoning Code building forms are named with an architectural style or land use (i.e., Duplex or Apartment), they do not control the specific architectural style of the building and often allow for a wide range of uses.

The development standards associated with each building form set up a three-dimensional “envelope” in which buildings may be built and specify required features such as entry locations and minimum percentage of transparent windows on the primary street facade. Larger building forms, such as the Apartment, General and Shopfront, allow a flexible three-dimensional envelope that can accommodate a range of smaller buildings. For example, a building built under the Apartment building form may look like a row home or duplex as long as it fits within the Apartment envelope.

The Denver Zoning Code Apartment and General building forms are most often used for slot home development as illustrated in the charts on page 16.
The table below provides a summary of zone district and building form combinations under which slot homes may be built. The development standards (maximum height, minimum setbacks, etc.). This table does not include Downtown (D-) or special zone districts. As illustrated in the table, slot homes are never possible in Single Unit (SU), Two Unit (TU) districts or using the Suburban House, Urban House, Tandem House or Drive Thru building forms. Development standards that apply to specific zone district and building form combinations are summarized in the table on page 12.

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* = Allows for slot home construction  ** = Allows for slot home construction with limitations, or on some lots/streets (see below)

*Two units per building only **Corner lots only (note that Town House and Row House forms are allowed on interior lots but may only have slot home characteristics when located on a corner with driveway access visible from the side street) ***Only in the U-RH-3A zone district on lots with arterial street frontage
DENVER ZONING CODE
NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXTS
The Denver Zoning Code is organized around “neighborhood contexts” intended to capture general development patterns across the city from Downtown to Suburban areas. Neighborhood contexts relevant to slot home construction include:

» **Suburban (S-)** with curving streets and varied block shapes/sizes - predominantly single-unit residential and shopping centers

» **Urban Edge (E-)** with curving and grid street patterns - predominantly single-unit residential and smaller shopping areas

» **Urban (U-)** with a regular street grid/alleys - predominantly single unit residential with main streets and corner stores

» **General Urban (G-)** with a regular street grid/alleys - predominantly multi-unit residential with main streets and corner stores

» **Urban Center (C-)** with regular street grid/alleys - predominantly multi-unit residential and mixed-use

SLOT HOMES IN FORMER CHAPTER 59 ZONE DISTRICTS
The existing zoning summarized in this section is applicable to the portions of Denver that were zoned after the 2010 Denver Zoning Code Update (nearly all recent slot home construction has occurred in these areas). It does not apply to the approximately 20% of the city that still has site-specific zoning in the Former Chapter 59 zoning code. Such areas are not part of the slot home evaluation project because the Former Chapter 59 zoning code cannot be amended.

Zoning Code Development Standards Related to Slot Homes
Denver Zoning Code development standards that relate to slot homes include maximum building height, minimum lot size, vehicle access standards, transparency requirements, entry requirements and other standards related to land use and building form. Specific development standards that relate to slot homes are summarized below. The illustrations on page 12 and table on page 13 provide a summary of applicable development standards.

**Maximum Building Height Standards**
In some Town House (TH) and Row House (RH) zone districts, maximum permitted building height is 2.5 stories or 30’. However, in most zone districts where slot homes are built, the height limit is 3 stories or 40’-45’. In high-scale mixed-use commercial districts where slot homes are sometimes built, maximum height can be as high as 5 stories or 70’, but slot home construction in these districts rarely exceeds about 3 stories or 45’ based on market conditions and building code requirements.

**Measurement of Maximum Building Height**
Building heights in feet are measured from a “base plane” calculated using the average of existing grades. In some cases, zoning height measurement rules do not count raised basements or garden levels as even though they may appear as an additional story when viewed from the street. In zone districts with 2.5 or 3 story height limits, this may result in buildings that appear to be 3 or 4 stories (or more using the height exceptions described below).

**Exceptions to Maximum Building Height**
All zone districts have permitted height exceptions for unoccupied building features, such as rooftop mechanical equipment and screening, elevator penthouses, and unoccupied rooftop stairwell access. The design parameters and maximum height exceptions are specific to each zone district, and most building features that exceed the maximum height must be set back from the perimeter of the building.

**View Planes**
In some areas, view planes establish more restrictive height limits to protect views of downtown and the mountains from specific vantage points. Generally, the closer a structure is located to the viewpoint, the more restrictive the height. View plane maps are posted to the City’s web site.

**Bulk Plane Standards**
In some lower-scale residential zone districts in the Urban Edge (E-), Urban (U-), and General Urban (G-) neighborhood contexts a “bulk plane” standard sets a lower height limit for the rear portion of the lot and limits height according to distance from side lot lines. Generally, taller buildings are permitted in the front of the lots and shorter buildings in the rear of the lot to respect historic building patterns and respect back yard privacy.
Build-to Standards
Build-to standards require that buildings be located within a specified setback range for a minimum percentage of the lot width to bring buildings close to the sidewalk edge and promote an active frontage. Build-to standards apply to the Shopfront and General forms in all neighborhood contexts and to the Row House and Apartment forms in the General Urban (G-) neighborhood context.

Alternatives to Build-to Standards
When a building cannot fully comply with the required build-to standards, the Denver Zoning Code allows for a certain percentage of the build-to requirement to be met by prescribed alternatives. These alternatives include garden walls, pergolas, courtyards and arcades.

Minimum Setback Standards
Minimum setback standards dictate building location in relation to front, side and rear lot lines. In Mixed Use (MX) and Main Street (MS) districts, there is generally no minimum primary street side or rear setback required. In some cases, minimum required setbacks vary by building form. For example, side interior setbacks can sometimes be as little as 3’ when using the Duplex building form on narrow lots.

Primary Street Block Sensitive Setbacks
In lower-scale residential zone districts in the Suburban (S-), Urban Edge (E-), Urban (U-), and General Urban (G-) neighborhood contexts, a minimum primary street block sensitive is required to maintain the existing front yard character along a block. When required, the block sensitive setback takes into account the primary street setbacks of existing structures surrounding a property where redevelopment is proposed. A required block sensitive setback will generally be greater than the Denver Zoning Code setback otherwise prescribed for the lot.

Maximum Building Coverage Standards
Maximum building coverage standards limit the proportion of a lot that may be covered by buildings. Only slot homes built under the Duplex building form are impacted by maximum building coverage (note that the Duplex form allows for more generous setbacks and encroachments, which may compensate for maximum building coverage standards).

BUILD-TO ALTERNATIVES
When a building cannot fully comply with required build-to standards, the Denver Zoning Code allows for a certain percentage of the requirement to be met by alternatives that clearly define the public realm, as illustrated in the examples below. See Denver Zoning Code Section 13.1.5.6.E for additional details and larger-scale illustrations.

"Garden Wall" is one of the most commonly used build-to alternatives. It allows masonry walls or mental fences with masonry piers to meet a specified percentage of the build-to requirement.

The "Permanent Outdoor Patio Seating" build-to alternative allows permanent seating areas to meet a specified percentage of the build-to requirement.

PRIMARY & SIDE STREET DESIGNATIONS
In most zone districts, the primary street is considered the zone lot line abutting the "long side of an oblong block," whereas the side street abuts the "short side of an oblong block." While some exceptions do apply, these street designations compel corresponding zoning standards such as build-to, setbacks, etc., with the Primary Street typically including the most prescriptive set of standards.
TRANSPARENCY ALTERNATIVES

When a building cannot fully comply with the required standards for transparency, the Denver Zoning Code allows for a certain percentage of the requirement to be met by alternatives to transparent glass, as illustrated in the examples below. See Denver Zoning Code Section 13.1.6.2.A.5 for additional details and larger-scale illustrations.

Transparency Standards

Transparency standards require a minimum percentage of transparent glass located within a “zone of transparency” (near eye level) on street level building facades to promote a more active and engaging frontage. They apply to the Apartment, General and Shopfront forms in all zone districts.

Transparency Alternatives

Like Build-to, when a building cannot fully comply with the required transparency, a certain percentage of the requirement can be provided using pre-defined alternatives that also engage the frontage, like ATMs, enhanced wall design (the most commonly used transparency alternative for slot homes), permanent outdoor eating/serving areas, and permanent art.

Pedestrian Access Standards

Pedestrian access standards specify required locations and features for building entries. They apply to all building forms in all zone districts, ranging from simple “Entry Features” (which can include gates or other features) on Duplex forms to an “Entrance” (which must be a street-facing door) on most other building forms. The Row House building form requires each unit to have a street-facing Entrance, while the Apartment, General and Shopfront require at least one Entrance per building.

Street Level Active Use Standards

The General and Shopfront building forms in the Urban (U-), General Urban (G-) and Urban Center (C-) neighborhood contexts limit inactive uses (parking structures, mini-storage, and some industrial uses) for a depth of 15’ along a percentage of the street level building facade to promote an active street frontage. Required percentages are highest for the Shopfront form in and General form in the Urban Center (C-) neighborhood context.
Vehicle Parking Standards

The amount of vehicle parking required greatly influences site layout and building design. Residential vehicle parking requirements vary by neighborhood context from 1.25 spaces per unit in Suburban (S-), 1 space in Urban Edge (E-), Urban (U-) and General Urban (G-), to .75 in Urban Center (C-). The Denver Zoning Code allows for certain reductions or exemptions from parking for proximity to enhanced transit facilities/corridors, programmatic features, such as care and bike share, or use and lot characteristics.

Surface Parking Between Buildings at the Street

For most building forms in the Urban Edge (E-), Urban (U-), General Urban (G-) and Urban Center (C-) contexts, Denver Zoning Code building form standards do not allow surface parking between the primary street and the primary building.

Parking Lot Design Criteria

Parking lots must be designed to meet minimum configuration standards to ensure usability and maneuverability. For slot home development, key standards include a minimum 23' wide drive aisle for two-way drive-aisles, a 5' back out space at the dead-end of a drive-aisle, and a requirement that each surface or garage parking space must be accessible in no more than two standard movements.

Parking Encroachment into Setbacks

In some cases, the Denver Zoning Code allows surface parking to encroach into side interior, side street or primary street setbacks. Slot homes built under the Duplex form may include surface parking within the side interior setback. Slot homes built under the Apartment form generally allow parking within the side interior setback only in the rear of the zone lot.

Landscaping & Grading Requirements

The Denver Zoning Code requires that all open areas within the build-to range and required setbacks be landscaped with at least 50% living material. Open areas are areas that are not covered by a permitted site improvement, such as a building or sidewalk. For most slot home development in zone districts with setbacks requirements, the Denver Zoning Code restricts the amount of grading that can be done within the first 10’ of the zone lot boundary and generally prohibits altering of grades within the side-interior setback.

PROTECTED DISTRICTS

The Denver Zoning Code designates some zone districts as “Protected Districts” that introduce requirements for compatible scale transitions between lower and higher-scale zone districts. Protected districts include Single Unit (SU) and Two Unit (TU) zone districts in all neighborhood contexts, Townhouse, lower scale Multi Unit districts in the Suburban (S-) and Urban Edge (E-) neighborhood contexts and Row House (RH) in Urban (U-) and General (G-) neighborhood contexts. Special requirements associated with Protected Districts apply to lots in adjacent higher-scale districts rather than lots within the Protected Districts themselves.

A slot home built on a lot adjacent to a Protected District must incorporate a larger side interior setback and further setback building elements taller than 27’ along the lot line adjoining the Protected District.
The graphics below illustrate key existing Denver Zoning Code standards that are relevant to slot home design in Denver. Letter labels refer to the summary table of zoning standards on the following page.
The table below summarizes key existing Denver Zoning Code standards that are relevant to slot home design in Denver. It does not summarize all applicable standards. Letter labels in the left column refer to key standards illustrated on the previous page.

### Height

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Stories &amp; Feet (max)</th>
<th>For most zone districts and building forms where slot homes are permitted, the maximum building height is 2.5 to 3 stories (35' to 40').</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Height Exceptions</td>
<td>Features such as roof parapets and eaves may exceed height limits. Unoccupied elevator penthouses and roof access stairwells may generally exceed height limits by up to 1 story (12').</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sitting

| C | Primary Street (min %) | In MX and MS zone districts, buildings must be located near the sidewalk edge for 50%-70% of the frontage to help activate the public realm. Standard does not apply in RH zone districts or to the Garden Court form. |

### Zone Lot

| D | Zone Lot Width & Size (min) | In most zone districts, using most building forms, slot homes may be built on 50' wide lots with a total of 6,000 square feet (note that practical considerations dictate that most slot homes occur on lots wider than 50'). |

### Setbacks & Building Coverage

| E | Primary Street (min) | Some zone districts require buildings to be set back within range of nearby front yards (block sensitive setback). Otherwise the required setback varies from 0' (MX, MS districts) to 20' (RH Districts). |
| F | Side Street (min) | Most zone districts require buildings to be set back a minimum of 5' from a side street zone lot line. No side street setback is required in MX or MS zone districts. |
| G | Side Interior (min) | Most zone districts and building forms require buildings to be set back a minimum of 5' from a side street zone lot line. No side interior setback is required in MX or MS zone districts. Minimum setbacks may be as low as 3' when using the Duplex form. |
| H | Rear, alley/no alley (min) | Most zone districts require buildings to be set back at least 10' to 12' from the rear zone lot line when there is an alley or 10' to 20' when there is not an alley. A rear setback is not generally required in MX or MS zone districts. |

### Parking

| I | Surface Parking between building and street | Surface parking is not allowed on primary streets. Surface parking is not allowed on primary or side streets in MS districts. |
| I | Vehicle Access, 3 or more side-by-side dwelling units in one structure | For all zone districts and building forms, slot homes must take vehicular access from an alley. Where no alley is present, street access is allowed. This special slot home standard was added to the Denver Zoning Code in 2015. |

### Design Elements

#### Building Configuration

| K | Transparency, Primary Street (min) | 25% to 30% transparent glass is generally required on the Street Level facing a Primary Street. Requirements are higher in MS districts and no transparency is required for the Garden Court form. |
| L | Transparency, Side Street (min) | 25% transparent glass is generally required on the Street Level facing a Side Street. No transparency is required for the Garden Court form. |
| M | Street Level Transparency Alternatives | Alternatives to transparent glass may be used to meet up to 80% of the transparency requirement. Alternatives include special wall design elements and permanent art. |

#### Use

| N | Pedestrian Access, Primary Street | Each building is generally required to have at least one entrance facing the Primary Street. The Row House and Garden Court forms require separate Street Level entrances for each dwelling unit. |

| O | Pedestrian Access alternatives | Covered walkways and courtyards can generally be used as an alternative to a required entrance. |

In U-MX and G-MX zone districts, 40% of the Street Level facing a Primary Street must include uses other than parking. In C-MX and all MS zone districts, 100% of the Street Level facing a Primary Street must include uses other than parking.
1.3 SLOT HOME DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

As summarized in the previous section, slot homes can be developed in a wide range of zone districts, using several Denver Zoning Code building forms. Zoning code allowances have combined with recent real estate market conditions to produce a significant boom in slot home construction across the city. Trends in the typical location of slot homes are summarized below. The time line on the next page illustrates past regulatory and market conditions that have culminated in the current slot home boom, the characteristics of which are summarized on page 16. Pages 17-20 illustrate typical slot home configurations that have been built in Denver.

Typical Neighborhood & Block Locations

While slot home development is technically possible in wide variety of neighborhoods across the city, it has been most intensive in older neighborhoods near downtown and on square blocks where multiple alleys (such as some blocks in West Colfax, Jefferson Park and Highlands) may offer advantages for vehicular access. Neighborhoods with a high concentration of slot home development include areas where home prices have risen the most dramatically and slot homes may offer a less expensive option for home ownership (see “Construction Defects Legislation & Slot Homes” at left for more information).

Slot Home Compatibility by Location

Compatibility is influenced by the context of the area where slot homes are built. When a block consists primarily of single family homes and duplexes, but is within a zone district that allows for larger-scale multifamily development, a new slot home development is often seen as incompatible. However, the same slot home development may be significantly more compatible if located on a block that is already more diverse with existing multifamily and slot home development. Where slot homes have been built in mixed-use commercial areas such as Tennyson Street in the Berkeley neighborhood, they may create a gap in the active street frontage.

In some neighborhoods, slot home development may be seen as compatible even where single family homes predominate because local objectives favor redevelopment and change. Most such neighborhoods are designated as Blueprint Denver Areas of Change. See "Blueprint Denver" on page 5 for more information. Note that the typical slot home configurations illustrated on pages 17-20 could be perceived as more or less compatible depending on the character of surrounding development (which is not illustrated).

Typical Lot Sizes and Dimensions for Slot Homes

Slot home development tends to occur on relatively narrow and deep lots, as illustrated in the charts on page 16. However, some of the slot home configurations illustrated on pages 17-20 require wider lots. These configurations tend to be built in neighborhoods, such as West Colfax, with small single-family homes on large lots. The lot configuration allows a developer to acquire only 1 or 2 relatively inexpensive existing lots to develop slot homes.
Slot homes are not a new phenomenon despite the growing attention across the city. Slot homes have been impacted by various forces such as building codes, zoning and real estate market forces. The following time line is an overview of the impacts and some of the developments that have occurred over time.

1. **Charter Amendment Vote 1923**
   Denver citizens pass an amendment to the City Charter empowering City Council to adopt a zoning ordinance.

2. **Former Chapter 59 Zoning 1956**
   The city adopted and mapped the first zoning code addressing uses and building limitations for all development. In response to city growth and the needs for the multi-family housing, many of Denver’s single-family residential neighborhoods were zoned R-3 or R-4 allowing for multi-family uses and regulating through floor area ratio instead of building height.

3. **Slot Home Beginnings 1974**
   Development of sideways facing town homes lacking pedestrian entries and featuring large garages at the street became more common. This development type was commonly occurred in R-3 zoning.

4. **First Zoning Ordinance 1925**
   Denver’s first zoning ordinance is adopted defining zones regulating building height and use.

5. **Infill Development 1962**
   Redevelopment begins to occur in many of Denver’s historic neighborhoods under CH 59 R-3 and R-4 zoning. Cars begin to dominate and pedestrian connection between buildings and the street are lost.

6. **SLOT HOME BEGINNINGS 1974**
   Infill Development
   Redevelopment begins to occur in many of Denver’s historic neighborhoods under CH 59 R-3 and R-4 zoning. Cars begin to dominate and pedestrian connection between buildings and the street are lost.

7. **Denver Zoning Code 2010**
   The adoption and mapping of the Denver Zoning Code leads a new form based approach and the introduction of new standards such as pedestrian entries, transparency, block-sensitive setbacks to promote new development that contribute to the pedestrian experience on the street.

8. **More Slot Homes 2013**
   In response to market demands, slot homes become a more prevalent development trend emerging in traditionally low-scale residential neighborhoods.

9. **City Initiates Slot Home Evaluation & Text Amendment 2016**
   Community Planning and Development kicks off the Slot Home evaluation and text amendment project to consider all zone districts and building forms that are relevant to slot home construction. Slot homes are described as sideways facing residential buildings that turn their sides to the street and may detract from the quality and the community of Denver’s neighborhoods.

10. **Construction Defects 2011**
    Developers react to the construction defects law with a sharp decrease in condo development, reducing the number of new for-sale housing units. As a result, developers began to search for new ways to construct for-sale fee-simple multi-unit housing.

11. **DZC Text Amendments 2014**
    CPD initiated a series of text amendments to address some of the concerns associated to slot homes. Improvements to the code addressed pedestrian entries, transparency alternatives, revised vehicular access to require alley access, and increased street level active use requirements in MS districts and created standards in MX districts. All of these amendments were adopted with the intent to achieve a better quality of experience for the pedestrian environment.

12. **Garden Court Moratorium 2016**
    City Council approved a moratorium on the use of the Garden Court building form, with exceptions, finding that the recent and proposed projects were not appropriate or consistent with the intent of the form.

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PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION REPORT - Draft 01/03/17

1.0 Existing Slot Home Conditions | 15
SLOT HOMES IN DENVER - What Has Been Built?

The charts below provide a graphic summary of slot home developments approved in 2015 and 2016 through the Site Development Plan (SDP) process. While the analysis is intended to capture a variety of slot homes across the city, it does not encompass every slot home approved or constructed since 2014.

**ZONE DISTRICTS**
- G-MU-3
- U-MX-3
- G-RH-3
- G-RO-3; G-RO-5; U-MS-2;
- U-RH-3A; U-RH-2.5; C-MX-3;
- C-MX-5; I-MX-3; E-MU-2.5

**ZONE LOT CHARACTERISTICS**
- 12,500sf (median) ranging from as small as 5,900sf to 28,150sf
- 128' deep (median)
- 90' wide

**NEIGHBORHOODS**
- WEST COLFAX
- JEFFERSON PARK
- HIGHLANDS
- FIVE POINTS
- CHERRY CREEK; SUNNYSIDE;
- BERKELEY; UNIVERSITY; HALE;
- CITY PARK WEST; NORTH
- CAPITOL HILL; REGIS

**BUILDING FORM**
- GENERAL
- APARTMENT
- ROW HOUSE
- GARDEN COURT
- SHOP FRONT
- TOWN HOUSE
- DUPLEX

**ZONE DISTRICTS**
- G-MU-3
- U-MX-3
- G-RH-3
- G-RO-3; G-RO-5; U-MS-2;
- U-RH-3A; U-RH-2.5; C-MX-3;
- C-MX-5; I-MX-3; E-MU-2.5

**FORM CHARACTERISTICS**
- 80% of slot homes are built in 3-story districts
- 91% are built within 1-foot of the side setbacks
- 42% provide twice the parking required

**BUILDINGS**
- 2 are contained within the average slot home development

**DWELLING UNITS**
- 10 for an average development (with some as small as 3 units and others as large as 28 units)

**NO FRONT PORCH**
- 60% of slot homes did not provide any sort of front porch on the development

**BLOCK SENSITIVE SETBACK**
- 38% of slot homes were subject to a block sensitive setback

**ALLEY ACCESS**
- 77% provided vehicular access from the alley

**ROOF DECK**
- 83% provided a roof deck, which often required a height exception
SLOT HOMES IN DENVER - A Single Row

The following four pages provide a sample of typical slot home configurations that have been built in Denver. The model images do not illustrate surrounding context, which likely influences their compatibility as summarized in "Slot Home Compatibility by Location" on page 14.

As illustrated on this page, a single row of slot homes is a common configuration, especially in neighborhoods with a pattern of narrow lots, or where lot consolidation is difficult. This configuration can generally be built on a lot as narrow as about 60' wide, which allows for 5’-7.5’ setback on the pedestrian access side, 25’-30’ street level building width (allowing for garage depth and a small entry) and a 23’ wide driveway. Per the chart below, the Denver Zoning Code generally allows this configuration to be built using the Apartment, General or Shopfront (but not the Garden Court) building forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone District Category</th>
<th>Town House (TH)</th>
<th>Garden Court</th>
<th>Row House (RH)</th>
<th>Apartment (Ap)</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Shopfront</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town House (TH)</td>
<td>□</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Row House (RH)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi Unit (MU)</td>
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<td>Residential Mixed Use (RM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential Office (RO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial Corridor (CC)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use (MX)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street (MS)</td>
<td>□</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Configuration could be built in the building form
- Configuration could be on a corner lot if able to meet the standards of the Row House or Town House

Side interior pedestrian entry
Primary street setback ‘front lawn’
Individual garages face side interior drive aisle
Side interior drive aisle
SLOT HOMES IN DENVER - Center Drive

Two rows of slot homes with a vehicular access driveway located between buildings is one of the most common slot home configurations, especially in neighborhoods with a pattern of wider lots, or where alley access is not present. Generally, this configuration can be built on a lot as narrow as about 100’ wide. Slot homes with a center driveway are most commonly built using the Apartment building form in the G-MU-3 zone district. Because the required courtyard must not be used for vehicle access, the Denver Zoning Code Garden Court building form does not allow for this slot home configuration, per the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone District Category</th>
<th>Building Forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Town House (TH)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi Unit (MU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residential Mixed Use (RX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residential Office (RO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commercial Corridor (CC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed Use (MX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main Street (MS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- = Configuration could be built in the building form
- = Configuration could be on a corner lot if able to meet the standards of the Row House or Town House

Side interior pedestrian entry
Primary street setback
Center drive aisle garage entries
Row house appearance when located on corner
SLOT HOMES IN DENVER - Center Court/Mews

Two rows of slot homes are sometimes configured around an interior court or mews (pedestrian access walkway) with vehicular access driveways located at either side, or to the rear along the alley. Because this configuration usually requires a wider lot than the “center drive,” it is most often located on:

» Zone lots with public alley frontage on one or both sides that may be used as a driveway

» Zone lots in Row House (RH) zone districts where the Garden Court is the only Denver Zoning Code building form that allows for slot home development

» Zone lots greater than about 125’ in width

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone District Category</th>
<th>Building Forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town House (TH)</td>
<td>Town House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row House (RH)</td>
<td>Row House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Unit (MU)</td>
<td>Apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Mixed Use (RX)</td>
<td>Garden Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Office (RO)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Corridor (CC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Use (MX)</td>
<td>Mixed Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Street (MS)</td>
<td>Shopfront</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Configuration could be built in the building form
- Configuration could be on a corner lot if able to meet the standards of the Row House or Town House

Side interior garage entries

Interior pedestrian entries from court/mews

Primary street setback ‘front lawn’

Side interior drive aisle
SLOT HOMES IN DENVER - Detached Parking

Each of the three previously illustrated slot home configuration (a single row, center driveway and center court) is sometimes built with parking detached (usually at the rear of the lot) from the primary structure rather than located below each unit. This variation often appears very different because it promotes front-facing units and does not include a side driveway to provide individual garage access. It is most often located on lots about 50’-60’ wide where a side driveway would not be possible. Slot homes with detached garages are most commonly built using the Apartment building form in the G-MU-3 zone district. When this configuration is built with two rows around a center pedestrian court, it may be built in an Row House (RH) zone district using the Garden Court form per the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone District Category</th>
<th>Town House (TH)</th>
<th>Row House (RH)</th>
<th>Multi Unit (MU)</th>
<th>Residential Mixed Use (RX)</th>
<th>Residential Office (RO)</th>
<th>Commercial Corridor (CC)</th>
<th>Mixed Use (MX)</th>
<th>Main Street (MS)</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Building Forms</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

■ = Configuration could be built in the building form
= Configuration could be built side by side around a pedestrian walkway meeting the standards for a "Garden Court"
2.0 IDENTIFYING THE SLOT HOME PROBLEM

Denver residents have struggled with issues related to the compatibility of slot home development for many years. Recent updates to the Denver Zoning Code have addressed some previously-identified concerns with slot home development, but included only a few “quick wins” (see “2015 Zoning Text Amendment” on page 6 for more information). The Slot Home Evaluation Project will include a comprehensive review of community-identified issues associated with slot homes.

This section provides information on the community process to better identify slot home issues and presents a formal problem statement that will provide a foundation for evaluation of alternative designs and recommended strategies. Note that the problem statement on page 23 is an initial draft statement created by City staff. It will be revised and refined based on discussion with the Slot Home Evaluation Task Force and wider community.

2.1 PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION APPROACH

The Slot Home Evaluation project will use a multi-step process to better identify issues associated with slot home development:

- **City Staff Evaluation.** Staff have reviewed previous community comments and surveyed existing slot home development to draft the initial problem identification statement on page 23 of this report.

- **Task Force Review.** The Slot Home Evaluation Task Force will review the initial problem identification statement, tour slot home development and provide feedback to inform a refined problem identification statement for presentation to the community. The next page includes a summary of the task force process.

- **Community Review.** City staff and the Slot Home Evaluation Task Force will conduct outreach to solicit community comments on the refined problem identification statement to inform drafting of a final problem identification statement that will serve as a foundation for addressing issues associated with slot home development.

The following page provides additional information on the task force and community review process.
Slot Home Task Force

The City of Denver’s Department of Community Planning and Development (CPD) has convened the Slot Home Evaluation Task Force to assist City staff with an evaluation of issues associated with slot home development in Denver’s neighborhoods, and recommend specific zoning text amendments to address identified issues. The 16 member task force represents community and other stakeholder interests, including residents, property owners, RNO representatives, elected officials, developers and architects to help ensure an inclusive public process.

Approximately 10 task force meetings will be scheduled during the Slot Home Evaluation and Text Amendment project. Early in the process, meetings will focus on better defining issues related to slot homes. The task force will then explore alternative design solutions and recommend specific strategies for updating the Denver Zoning Code. All meetings are open to the public. Visit www.denvergov.org/slothomes for the latest meeting schedule.

The Denver Planning Board and City Council will consider Task Force recommendations before adopting potential future amendments to the Denver Zoning Code.

Other Opportunities for Community Participation

The Slot Home Evaluation and Text Amendment project will include a range of community outreach opportunities in addition to regularly-scheduled public task force meetings. Key opportunities will include:

- **Community Open Houses.** At least three public open house sessions will provide an opportunity for review of identified slot home issues, alternative design solutions and recommended updates to the Denver Zoning Code. Visit www.denvergov.org/slothomes for information on upcoming open house events.
- **Presentations to Neighborhood Organizations or Others.** Upon request, City staff will attend scheduled neighborhood organization meetings to present the project, answer questions and obtain feedback. City staff will also provide updates to the Zoning and Planning Committee (ZAP) of Inter Neighborhood Cooperation (INC).
- **Office Hours/One-one-one Sessions.** In later phases of this project, City Staff will schedule sessions for individual residents or other stakeholders to drop-in and discuss project recommendations.
- **Public Hearings.** In the final phase of the project, the Denver Planning Board and City Council will review, and potentially adopt, proposed text amendments to the Denver Zoning Code. Members of the public may sign up to speak at these public hearings.
- **Survey.** City staff will work with the task force to determine whether additional tools, such as an online survey would be appropriate to gather information regarding slot home issues and/or proposed strategies to address slot homes.
- **Web Site and Newsletter.** A project web site at www.denvergov.org/slothomes will provide updated information on project events, community feedback and proposed strategies.

REMINDER: WHAT IS A SLOT HOME?
For the purpose of this evaluation and problem identification, a “slot home” is a multi-unit residential structure consisting of attached dwelling units arranged side-by-side and primarily perpendicular to the street. Most dwelling units have an individual, direct entrance to the exterior adjacent to a side lot line. Individual vehicular garages are generally located beneath each unit.

Slot homes are also sometimes called “sideways-facing town homes” or “fraux homes.”

SLOT HOME STRATEGY REPORT
As the Slot Home Evaluation and Text Amendment project continues, this report will be updated to include summaries of task force discussion and present results from community open house activities. In a later phase of the project, the material in this report will provide the basis for a “Strategy Report” that summarizes the project process and presents specific recommendations for updates to the Denver Zoning Code to address identified issues with slot home development.
2.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

To better understand concerns regarding slot home development, Denver Community Planning and Development Department staff conducted an initial review of slot home projects to more clearly frame the potential problem. Section 1.3 “Slot Home Development Trends” on page 14 provides a summary of observed slot home characteristics. An evaluation of those characteristics provides the basis for the following initial problem statement:

The problem is new multifamily slot home construction that is incompatible with the street frontage, adjacent properties and neighborhood in five key respects:

1. **Street Engagement.** Many slot homes do not engage the street frontage with street level building activities, entrances, transparency (windows), or other façade design elements.

2. **Contextual Design.** The scale, proportions, massing and facade design of slot homes sometimes do not reflect the community character of the surrounding uses, elements of the public realm or typical design characteristics of the neighborhood.

3. **Vehicle-oriented Design.** Slot homes often incorporate visible driveways, parking areas and garage doors that negatively impact the pedestrian-oriented character of the street and neighborhood.

4. **Building Placement.** Slot homes may disrupt the existing rhythm of building placement on residential frontages by incorporating unusual front or side building setbacks.

5. **Impacts on Neighbors.** Slot homes often orient their most active facade areas towards adjacent properties, rather than the street, or include other elements which may have negative visual or privacy impacts on neighbors.
2.3 NEXT STEPS

The initial problem identification statement will be significantly refined through:

• **Task Force Evaluation.** The Slot Home Task Force (see page 22) will review and discuss potential issues with slot home development and draft a refined problem statement for discussion with the community.

• **Community Dialog.** City staff and the task force will present the refined problem statement to the community at a public open house to obtain feedback before drafting a final problem statement.

The final problem statement will guide the remaining steps in the project, including a recommended strategy to address slot homes, and a proposed Denver Zoning Code text amendment.